

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 215378

NODIS
FOR THE AMBASSADOR ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OTRA, US, KS

SUBJECT: CARTER-PARK SUMMIT MEETING

1. PRESIDENT CARTER EARLIER AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO A PARK MEETING WITH AGREEMENT ON DETAILS TO AWAIT A MORE FAVORABLE CLIMATE. WE THINK A PROPITIOUS CLIMATE MAY BE AT HAND. BEFORE WE CAN AGREE TO A SUMMIT, HOWEVER, WE NEED KOREAN COOPERATION ON TWO VITALLY IMPORTANT ISSUES: KIM DONG-JO'S TESTIMONY AND HUMAN RIGHTS. WE ANTICIPATE THAT IN THE NEAR FUTURE WE WILL RECEIVE A FORTHCOMING RESPONSE TO THE KIM DONG-JO QUESTIONNAIRE AND WILL ESSENTIALLY CLOSE THE QUESTION OF KOREAN COOPERATION WITH THE KOREA-GATE INVESTIGATIONS ON A POSITIVE NOTE. REGARDING HUMAN
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RIGHTS, UNLESS THE ROKG TAKES A MAJOR STEP WHICH IS SEEN AS A SIGNAL OF ITS INTENTION TO PROCEED WITH LIBERALIZATION ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS FRONT, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO AGREE TO A CARTER-PARK MEETING. WE HAVE IN MIND ABOLITION OF THE TWO REMAINING EMERGENCY MEASURES, WITH THE RELEASE OF KIM TAE-CHUNG AS A SOMEWHAT LOWER PRIORITY U.S. OBJECTIVE. SINCE THE LATE DECEMBER PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURA-

TION WILL BE A TRADITIONAL TIME FOR AMNESTY, WE ARE THINKING IN TERMS OF A SUMMIT IN THE FIRST HALF OF 1979.

2. WHEN PRESIDENT PARK ASKS YOU TO CALL ON HIM UPON HIS

RETURN FROM VACATION, YOU SHOULD RAISE THE SUBJECT OF A SUMMIT MEETING AND MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS.

A. THE PROCESS OF RECOVERING FROM RECENT STRAINS IN KOREAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS COULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY STRENGTHENED BY A SUMMIT MEETING, AND WE ARE PREPARED TO BEGIN DISCUSSING ARRANGEMENTS;

B. IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO THE SUCCESS OF SUCH A MEETING FOR THE TWO COUNTRIES TO BE SEEN TO BE TAKING SERIOUSLY THE MAJOR ISSUES IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. IN OUR VIEW THESE ISSUES ARE:

-- SECURITY: CONGRESSIONAL PASSAGE OF THE EQUIPMENT TRANSFER LEGISLATION AND FIRM RESTATEMENT OF THE U.S. SECURITY COMMITMENT TO KOREA BY PRESIDENT CARTER, SECRETARY BROWN AND OTHERS PUT THIS ISSUE IN A FAVORABLE LIGHT. A SUMMIT WOULD HIGHLIGHT THE SECURITY COMMITMENT.

-- KOREAGATE: ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TESTIMONY OF TONGSUN PARK AND THE FORTHRIGHT RESPONSES FROM KIM DONG-JO WHICH CONFIDENTIAL

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WE EXPECT TO RECEIVE SHORTLY SHOULD PUT THIS ISSUE BEHIND US.

-- HUMAN RIGHTS; STEPS SUCH AS THE RELEASE OF 22 DETAINEES ON AUGUST 15 ARE WELCOME IN THE UNITED STATES, BUT ARE WIDELY PERCEIVED AS INADEQUATE. THIS PERCEPTION COULD MAR THE FAVORABLE IMPACT OF A PRESIDENTIAL MEETING UNLESS IT IS PRECEDED BY SOME SPECIFIC ACTION WHICH WILL DEMONSTRATE A LONG-TERM ROKG COMMITMENT TO LIBERALIZATION. OUR MUTUAL ABILITY TO DERIVE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FROM A SUMMIT MEETING, IN TERMS OF TIMING, LOCATION AND SUBSTANCE, WOULD BE GREATLY ENHANCED IF A MEETING WERE PRECEDED BY POSITIVE ROKG ACTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

3. WE RECOGNIZE THAT TOO DIRECT A LINKAGE IN YOUR CONVERSATIONS WITH PARK BETWEEN HUMAN RIGHTS AND A SUMMIT MEETING COULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, AND WE LEAVE IT TO YOUR DISCRETION TO PRESENT THE CASE IN THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT IN FOLLOWING UP WITH OTHER ROKG LEADERS SUCH AS KCIA DIRECTOR KIM, YOU MAY WANT TO MAKE THE LINKAGE CLEAR. IN THIS CONNECTION BOTH THE TIMING AND THE VENUE OF A MEETING COULD BE USEFUL,

SINCE THE KOREANS ARE LIKELY TO WANT A MEETING AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE, AND IN WASHINGTON. WITH REGARD TO THE VENUE, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO ARGUE THAT THE PUBLIC ATMOSPHERE FOR A SUMMIT MEETING WILL BEAR HEAVILY ON ITS SUCCESS, AND THAT FROM THIS POINT OF VIEW A WASHINGTON MEETING IN THE ABSENCE OF CONCRETE HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRESS WOULD BE

UNACCEPTABLE.

4. ONCE YOU HAVE OPENED UP THE VISIT ISSUE WITH PRESIDENT PARK, WE INTEND TO FOLLOW UP HERE WITH AMBASSADOR KIM. CHRISTOPHER

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